

## **Alpena Wildlife Sanctuary Board Minutes February 22, 2018**

**Members Present:** Roger Witherbee, Vernie Nethercut, Tom Orth, Adam Poll, Boris Gerber, Terry Gougeon, Christian Stevens, Susie Austin, Judy Kalmanek

**Members Absent:** Elizabeth Littler (excused), Karen Enterline,

**Resource Members:** Catherine Stedman, Mark Beins

**I. Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order by Chair Terry Gougeon at 4:00 pm.

Two items were added to the agenda by the chair:

Questions about the budget for the Wildlife Sanctuary

The annual report of the board to the City Council

### **2. Approval of the minutes:**

A motion was made by Boris, seconded by Susie and carried that the minutes of January 18, 2018 be approved.

### **3. City Update:**

Adam reported that there is nothing current that directly impacts this board. He noted that the splash park at Mich-e-ke-wis is moving ahead and plans call for it to be operational by July 4<sup>th</sup>. The work on the dog park will begin once the repairs to the collapsed north bank of the river are completed. That work will occur in the spring. The Farmers' Market outdoor venue will be changed to Mich-e-ke-wis near Performance Locker in the parking lot.

A question was asked whether the no-wake signs have been posted. Adam did not know; but, he will find out.

### **4. Update: River Center, Festivus/Reel Fun:**

The Reel Fun Ice Fishing Tournament and Festivus is taking up the time of the River Center Board and the committee at present. The events will be held on Friday February 23<sup>rd</sup> for Festivus and the 24<sup>th</sup> for the fishing tournament. Ticket sales are going well for the tournament. Board members were encouraged to promote Festivus tickets.

Judy reported that there was a plan to apply for a grant for the kayak/canoe storage. However, that would take some time and Casey Stutzman has opted to go ahead with the storage building. Questions were raised about how the building might impact the view and whether the building is temporary and can be removed if funding is obtained for the in-ground storage later. It was suggested that the building itself needs to be incorporated into the annual contract with the kayak vendor.

### **5. Artist in Residence**

Mark would like to be able to notify Charles Pompilius that he has been selected as Artist-in-Residence for the Wildlife Sanctuary for 2018. The board has had an opportunity to review Charles' works online and were impressed. Terry motioned, seconded by Judy and carried that Charles Pompilius be selected as Artist-in-Residence for 2018.

### **6. Island Park Maintenance:**

Terry noted that Roger and Boris had successfully cut the tree that had fallen across the trail.

However, there are a couple more that have fallen meanwhile and will need to be removed. Terry needs the Island Park Maintenance report for 2017. Judy will look through the minutes and send the information to Terry.

### **7. The Issue of Sledding:**

There is great concern by the board that the on-going practice of sledding on the Island is quite destructive. Sled runners as well as tramping of the dunes areas by ice fishers is compacting the soil and preventing the return of undergrowth in the spring. Sledding damage is strongly in evidence on the hill near the entrance to the Island where the undergrowth has been completely destroyed. In winter the marked trails are hard to identify and people roam at will throughout the Island. Residents still refer to the Island as Sportsman's Island and continue to use it as they have for many years. Education needs to explain what a natural area is and why Island Park fills this role. It was suggested that the signs indicating the name sportsman's Island be removed. We need to have a strong educational program to help local residents understand that the role of the Island is to promote quiet recreational opportunities for all while conserving the fragile island's various habitats. Island use will need to reflect this objective and promoting the idea to use only designated trails must be strongly advocated. Other suggestions included building a stairway from the viewing platform to the water's edge. People want to access the water on the west side of the Island. Perhaps Home Depot would be willing to supply the materials for the stairway. Another suggestion was that the board take a pro-active role and suggest another site for sledding. Adam suggested writing a letter to the city's recreation board who will soon be reviewing the city recreational plan concerning Mich-e-ke-wis. Now is the time to put in our suggestions for a sledding site there. This might entail just dumping the city snow into large piles and grading them somewhat. A motion was made by Vernie, seconded by Judy and carried that the board send a letter to the recreation board asking them to consider how a sledding site for winter use be created at Mich-e-ke-wis. Terry will draft a letter to the recreation board for the Wildlife Sanctuary Board to act upon at the April meeting.

### **8. Additional Agenda:**

Terry had questions concerning the board's budget and had added the concern as an agenda item. Adam explained that the categories are from the city; however, the funds can be spent as the board decides. The budget is \$4,000 down from \$4,500 two years ago. Adam will check to see what remains in this fiscal year's budget. The new fiscal year will begin on July 1<sup>st</sup>; there is generally no carry-over from year-to-year. Terry will review the categories and send them out to the board with his proposed use of the funds beginning with the new fiscal year, 7-1-2018 through 6-30-2019.

Terry will give the annual report to the City Council at their March 19, 2019 meeting. Susie will send him the statistics on the River Rats program to include in the report.

### **9. Round Table**

Catherine said that Elizabeth is trying to obtain the needed native plants for the riparian setback that is being established at Duck Park near the US-23 bridge. The riparian setback committee will meet once Elizabeth returns.

### **10. Next Meeting:**

The next meeting of the Alpena Wildlife Sanctuary Board will be held in City Council chambers on March 15, 2018 at 4:00 p.m.

**11. Adjourn**

Tom motioned, seconded by Judy that the meeting be adjourned.

Minutes taken and submitted by  
Judy Kalmanek, Secretary  
Alpena Wildlife Sanctuary Board